

EDITORIAL NOTES.

"We gird us for the coming fight,
And strong in Him whose cause is ours,
In conflict with unholy powers,
We grasp the weapons he has given,
The light, the truth, the love of heaven."

The following beautiful illustration of how in the Kingdom of God struggle and pain work for the benefit of His creatures, is given in the Christian Observer:

"I once heard, from the lips of a beloved pastor, a beautiful illustration. A naturalist one day was studying a cocoon, in which a butterfly was struggling to be free. He heard it beating against the sides of its little prison, and his heart went out in pity for the helpless creature. Taking a tiny lancet he cut away the fragile walls and released the little captive. But to his amazement it was not the beautiful creature that he had expected to see. It lay struggling upon the table, unable to walk, unable to fly, a helpless, unlovely object. In place of the gorgeously colored wings that he had expected to see, were weak shriveled members. What was the matter with this creature that should have been so fair? The prison gates had been opened too soon, the obstacle had been removed before the struggler had developed sufficiently through struggling to be ready for its glorious flight into the sunshiny skies and among the perfumed flowers. O God, when the walls seem to close about us, when we struggle and agonize to be free, when Thou dost not cut away the barriers, is it not because, in Thine infinite wisdom, Thou dost see that we are weak, and dost want us to become strong? Then at last, when the struggle is finished, like the butterfly, we may come forth, not, perhaps, in glorious robes of splendid colors as it is, but in the everlasting robes of righteousness."

We are sorry to see our Bengal's friends giving themselves over to a movement which can only end in humiliation and loss to themselves. If by the cause of *Swadeshi* is to be understood the promotion of Indian art and manufacture—the advancement of India in the production of every sphere of honest industry, we believe every resident in India, European as well as Indian, will be ready to promote such a cause. But when there is a spiteful war upon foreign goods and upon those who wish to use them, we can only characterize the movement as madness. When again the occasion for the outbreak is the failure of these patriots to prevent the formation of a new province in Eastern Bengal, the whole movement reminds one of the child who refuses to allow its offending playmate to play in the back yard.

The idea that Indian gentlemen can be dragged into acceptance of a boycott seems hardly consistent with the eloquent plea of some of these gentlemen for liberty. It would be interesting to hear what definition these gentlemen would give to the words *liberty* and *human rights*. It looks as if the veneer of education was too thin to hide the hideous oppression of the old caste system.

It is to be hoped that the judgement of cooler heads will bring about a settlement satisfactory to all interests.

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S OMNIPOTENT POWER OVER MEN.

We believe now that there is actually nothing which the Holy Spirit cannot do in the hearts of all kinds of people when He wishes to reveal His power. People have been brought to profess Christ in all sorts of ways and many in the most wonderful and least expected way. One family belonging to the priest clan in a neighbouring village has recently been actually forced to Christianity. Some months ago the members of this family attended the meetings for some time, and we thought then that they would give themselves to Christ, but they soon drifted away and ceased coming altogether. We often find that the devil over-reaches himself and his projects turn against himself. This case looks to us as if God overruled for good what Satan intended for evil. One of the sons of the above family, a desperate man, rose against his mother and all the family, and by force took possession of all they had—the house and all that was in it and threatened to kill all. The family ran for their lives to the safest place they could think of, viz., to the Christians. They came here without anything, they were considered to be well-to-do people but now they were destitute. The mother feared to sue him lest he should kill her: he was such a terror to all. We agreed to make the matter a subject of prayer. All the Church members put up their hands to signify their willingness to pray for the family. In a day or two the son repented and of his own will agreed to give up the property, only begging for a small portion for himself, which the family gladly gave. The whole family became Christians and the Saviour taught them at the outset of their Christian career, the value and power of prayer and at the same time strengthened the faith of the church.

Another family was brought to Christ in a totally different way. This family belongs to the Rajah clan and lives in a village four miles from the Mission Station. The eldest son, a lad, had been won over to Christ some months ago, and in consequence suffered much persecution from his parents. They did their utmost to prevent him entering the Church, but failed. Then they began to irritate him by speaking in an evil way of the Saviour. One day the father and he were out together and the old man was worse

of the hall of ethical culture. You think that you have got your Ten Commandments whether you have your Christianity or not, and that the old record 'Thou shalt not steal,' 'Thou shalt not kill,' 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' is still in force. By whose authority in force? By whom? By the authority of the philosophy that speaks to us to-day, and that tells us that the only reason why we should not lie and steal and commit adultery and do the other forbidden things is that if we did it and others follow our example, it would not be more than two or three millions of years before society would go to pieces. Is that sanctioned? Is that going to influence any man to resist the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life. I tell you that human nature, being what it is, you need all the re-straining motive of law and intuitional morality and supernatural religion and law of God and, 'Thus saith Jehovah,' to keep men back from sin and to hold them straight. I am a little tired of hearing men tell us that a crisis in religion is coming. I tell you that crisis is here. I tell you that dislocation of philosophy and religion has already come. You may try to put your philosophy in one pocket and your religion in the other and think that, since they are separate, they will not interfere. But that will not work. You may try as philosophers of the *lux mundi* school are trying, to accept all the results of the higher criticism, and yet at the same time hold on to the traditional doctrine of an unbroken historical testimony. And that will not work. You may try as the Ritschlians are trying to let philosophy go and build simply on sympathy and mysticism. And that will not work. You may think that religion is a sort of illogical thing and you can't reduce it to logic, but that is exactly what Tertullian said so long ago. You have to bring your theory of the universe and your theory of religion together, and this is the work of this age, and it is because we believe that Christianity came down from heaven from God, God's blessed gift to man for man's salvation, that we are optimistic to the last degree. I believe that sooner or later, if it were only through the simple doctrine of the soul's immortality and our inherent belief in it, that men will assert their birthright, claim their kinship with God, if in their hearts' depths their readiness to see him, and meet him, cries out from those depths for some way of being justified with him, and rest not until they find it in the Gospel way."

We can give only what we have. Happiness, grief, gayety, sadness, are by nature contagious. Bring your health and strength to the weak and sickly, and so you will be of use to them. Give them not your weakness, but your energy—so you will revive and lift them up. Life alone can rekindle life.

RAM MOHUN ROY ON HINDU IDOLATRY.

Among Indians of modern times, Rammohun Roy probably deserves the foremost place for his zeal in the cause of reform and his earnest desire to benefit his countrymen. One of his earliest efforts was, if possible, to wean Hindus from idolatry to the spiritual worship of the one true God. The following are some extracts from his works on the subject. Some of them are from two replies to *Defences of Idolatry* published in Madras and Calcutta.

1. EUROPEAN EXCUSES FOR IDOLATRY.

1. *Idols emblematic representations.*

I have observed, that both in their writings and conversation, many Europeans feel a wish to palliate and soften the features of Hindu idolatry; and are inclined to inculcate, that all objects of worship are considered by their votaries as emblematical representations of the Supreme Divinity! If this were indeed the case, I might perhaps be led into some examination of the subject: but the truth is, the Hindus of the present day have no such views of the subject, but firmly believe in the real existence of innumerable gods and goddesses, who possess, in their own departments, full and independent power, and to propitiate them and not the true God, are temples erected and ceremonies performed.

2. *Instruments for raising the Mind.*

Some Europeans, imbued with high principles of liberality, but unacquainted with the ritual part of Hindu idolatry, are disposed to palliate it by an interpretation which, though plausible, is by no means well-founded. They are willing to imagine that the idols which the Hindus worship, are not viewed by them in the light of gods or as real personifications of the divine attributes, but merely as instruments for raising their minds to the contemplation of those attributes, which are respectively represented by different figures. I have frequently had occasion to remark that many Hindus also who are conversant with the English language, finding this interpretation a more plausible apology for idolatry than any with which they are furnished by their own guides, do not fail to avail themselves of it, though in repugnance both to their faith and their practice. The declarations of this description of Hindus naturally tend to confirm the original idea of such Europeans who, from the extreme absurdity of pure unqualified idolatry, deduce an argument against its existence. It appears to them impossible for men, even in the very last degree of intellectual darkness, to be so far misled as to consider a mere image of wood or of stone as a *human being*, much less a divine existence. With a view therefore to do away with any misconception of this nature which may have prevailed, I beg leave to submit the following considerations.

Hindus of the present age, with a very few exceptions, have not the least idea that it is to the attributes of the Supreme Being, as figuratively represented by shapes corresponding to the nature of those attributes, they offer adoration and worship under the denomination of gods and goddesses. On the contrary, the slightest investigation will clearly satisfy every inquirer, that it makes a material part of their system to hold as articles of faith all these particular circumstances which are essential to a belief in the independent existence of the objects of their idolatry as deities clothed with divine power.

Locality of habitation and a mode of existence analogous to their own views of earthly things, are uniformly ascribed to each particular god. Thus the devotees of Siva, not only place an implicit credence in the separate existence of Siva, but even regard him as an omnipotent being, the greatest of all the divinities, who, as they say, inhabit the northern mountain of Kailas; and that he is accompanied by two wives and several children, and surrounded with numerous attendants. The same observations are equally applicable to every class of Hindu devotees in regard to their respective gods and goddesses.

Neither do they regard the images of these gods merely in the light of instruments for elevating the mind to the conception of those supposed beings; they are simply in themselves made objects of worship. For whatever Hindu purchases an idol in the market, or constructs one with his own hands, or has one made under his own superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies, called *Pran Pratishtha*, or the endowment of animation, by which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life but supernatural powers. Shortly afterwards, if the idol be of the masculine gender, he marries it to a feminine one; with no less pomp and magnificence than he celebrates the nuptials of his own children. The mysterious process is now complete; and the god and goddess are esteemed the arbiters of his destiny, and continually receive his most ardent adoration.

At the same time, the worshipper of images ascribes to them at once the opposite natures of human and of super-human beings. In attention to their supposed wants as living beings, he is seen feeding, or pretending to feed them every morning and evening; and as in the hot season he is careful to fan them, so in the cold he is equally regardful of their comfort, covering them by day with warm clothing, and placing them at night in a snug bed. But superstition does not find a limit here; the acts and speeches of the idols, and their assumptions of various shapes and colours, are gravely related by the Brahmans, and with all the marks of veneration are firmly believed by their deluded followers.

In thus endeavouring to remove a mistake, into which I have reason to believe many European gentlemen have been led by a benevolent wish to find an excuse for the errors of my countrymen, it is a considerable gratification to me to find that the latter have begun to be so far sensible of the absurdity of their real belief and practices, as to find it convenient to shelter them under such a cloak, however flimsy and borrowed. The adoption of such a subterfuge encourages me greatly to hope, that they will, in time, abandon what they are sensible cannot be defended; and that, forsaking the superstition of idolatry, they will embrace the rational worship of the God of Nature.

2. MISCELLANEOUS EXCUSES.

1. *"If God be omnipresent, according to the Vedant, the worship of figured gods should be admitted."*

The Vedant is well known as a work which inculcates only the unity of God; but if every existing creature should be taken for a god by the followers of the Vedant, the doctrines of that work must be admitted to be more at variance with that idea than those of the advocates of idolatry, as the latter are contented with the recognition of only a few millions of gods and goddesses; but the Vedant in that case must be supposed to admit the divinity of every living creature in nature.

God is everywhere; but God is at the same time quite different from what we see or feel.

2. *"Idols were invented for those who are not possessed of sufficient understanding."*

Permit me in this instance to ask whether every Mussulman in Turkey from the highest to the lowest, every Protestant Christian at least of Europe, and many followers of Cabeer and Nanak to worship God without the assistance of consecrated objects? If so, how can we suppose that the human race is not capable of adoring the Supreme Being without the puerile practice of having recourse to visible objects? I will never hesitate to assert, that His adoration is not only possible, and practicable, but even incumbent, upon every rational creature.

3. *"If God be worshipped in a Church or in a Mosque, how can He be dishonoured by being worshipped under the form of an image?"*

Those who contemplate God in a Church or Mosque, never pay divine homage to those places; but those that pretend to worship God under the form of an image, consider it to be possessed of divine nature, and at the same time, most inconsistently, as imbued with immoral principles. The learned Brahman will, I hope, be convinced of the impropriety of the analogy which he has drawn between a worship *within* a certain material object and a worship *of* a material object.

4. *"Idols are like pictures recalling friends to memory."*

This observation of the learned Brahman induces me to suppose that he must have formed a notion of God quite strange and contemptible; for it is almost impossible for a man who has a becoming idea of God's superiority to all creatures to represent Him, as the Hindus very often do, in a form so shameful, that a description of it is prohibited by common decency, or in a shape so ridiculous, as that of a piebald kite, or of jackals, &c. And it is equally difficult to believe that a rational being can make use of such objects to bring the All-perfect Almighty Power to his recollection.

5. *"Is the sight of the image displeasing?"*

My answer must be affirmative. It is extremely natural that, to a mind whose purity is not corrupted by a degrading superstition, the sight of images which are often of the most hideous or indecent description, and which must therefore excite disgust in the minds of the spectators, should be displeasing.

Short Paper, No 77.

Hearts, like doors, can ope with ease
To very, very little keys;
And don't forget that two of these
Are "I thank you" and "if you please."

FOR OTHERS.

By Rev. G. M. Donehoo.

"For others"—what a glorious thought,
That we, so crowded on this busy earth,
Can learn this lesson with such blessing fraught,
Living the only life of real worth,
For others.

The cares and toils that burden and annoy,
The heart-aches that so keenly pierce to-day,
The sorrows that o'ercloud the path of joy,
Are lightened when forgetting self, we pray
For others.

Oh! Let us then in kindly sympathy
Be watchful e'er for every chance to bless;
Following Him who e'en on Calvary's tree
'Pleased not himself,' but suffered on the
Cross For others.

Thus walking in His footsteps day by day,
Trying to be like Jesus 'mid the earthly strife,
Thou'lt come in God's appointed time and way
To dwell with him who gave His precious life
For others.

WHEN I HAVE TIME.

When I have time, so many things I'll do
To make life happier and more fair
For those whose lives are crowded now with care.
I'll help to lift them from their low despair
When I have time.

When I have time, the friend I love so well
Shall know no more these weary, toiling days.
I'll lead her feet in pleasant paths always,
And cheer her heart with words of sweetest praise,
When I have time.

When you have time! The friend you hold so dear
May be beyond the reach of your intent,
May never know that you so kindly meant
To fill her life with such a sweet content,
When you had time.

Now is the time. Ah, friend, no longer wait
So scatter loving smiles and words of cheer
To those around whose lives are now so drear!
They may not meet you in the coming year—
When you have time.

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Yes, we must be watchful, especially in the beginning of the temptation, for the enemy is then more easily overcome if he be not suffered to enter the door of our hearts, but be resisted at the very gate on his first knocking.

—Thomas a Kempis.

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